

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

January 12, 2018

The Honorable Rodney Frelinghuysen
Chairman
House Committee on Appropriations
H-305, The Capitol
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Nita Lowey
Ranking Member
House Committee on Appropriations
1016 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Mario Diaz-Balart
Chairman
House Appropriations Subcommittee on
Transportation, Housing and Urban
Development, and Related Agencies
2358-A Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable David Price
Ranking Member
House Appropriations Subcommittee on
Transportation, Housing and Urban
Development, and Related Agencies
1016 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Frelinghuysen, Ranking Member Lowey, Chairman Diaz-Balart, and Ranking Member Price:

On behalf of commuters and community stakeholders who rely on the Northeast Corridor (NEC), we respectfully request that any final Fiscal Year (FY) 2018 appropriations legislation include robust funding for the Federal-State Partnership for State of Good Repair, a federally authorized grant program dedicated to repairing and replacing existing rail assets, including portions of the NEC in a state of disrepair.

As you know, the House appropriated \$500 million in H.R. 3353, the FY 2018 Transportation, Housing and Urban Development, and Related Agencies appropriations bill, for the Federal-State Partnership for State of Good Repair grant program. This provision was included in H.R. 3354, a larger FY 2018 appropriations package that passed the House on September 14, 2017, by a vote of 211-198. This \$500 million in funding could be leveraged, via state matching requirements, into another \$500 million, bringing the potential total investment up to \$1 billion. Unfortunately, pending appropriations legislation in the U.S. Senate includes only \$26 million for this important program.

Authorized by the Fixing America's Surface Transportation (FAST) Act of 2015, the Federal-State Partnership for State of Good Repair grant program was designed to fund capital repair and replacement projects on publically-owned or Amtrak-owned infrastructure to bring passenger rail facilities, equipment, and infrastructure into a state of good repair. Given its impact on the regional and national economy, repairing the NEC through this grant program must be a top priority.

The longer the necessary repairs go unaddressed, the higher the costs of maintenance, the lower the reliability, and the greater the long-term risks to the NEC. According to the Northeast Corridor Commission, "The loss of the NEC for a single day could cost the country \$100 million in added congestion, productivity losses, and other transportation impacts." At the same time, Amtrak and commuter railroads operating on the NEC transport a workforce that contributes nearly \$50 billion annually to the American economy.

The disparity between what the NEC provides to the nation and what it receives in investment is staggering. Years of under-investment have taken a toll on the NEC's existing rail infrastructure. In the past year alone, we have seen multiple incidents adversely impact the NEC and its nearly 800,000 daily rail passengers. To provide another example of the importance of this infrastructure, in 2012, Hurricane Sandy battered the Northeast seaboard and caused \$4.75 billion in infrastructure damage to commuter and passenger rail networks along the NEC. Nearly 11 million commuters were left without service, and Amtrak suspended service ending and originating in East Coast stations, severely impacting mobility along the corridor. Recent public incidents on the corridor, and the 5-year anniversary of Hurricane Sandy, are important reminders of the need to invest in the corridor now rather than kick the can down the road.

Investing in the repair and replacement of existing NEC infrastructure through the Federal-State Partnership for State of Good Repair grant program should be a top priority. Robust support and funding for the Federal-State Partnership for State of Good Repair grant program is a much-needed investment in the health and public safety of our communities and families.

We applaud your attention to this request and thank you for your leadership on this critical challenge.

Sincerely,



Ryan A. Costello
Member of Congress



Patrick Meehan
Member of Congress



Lou Barletta
Member of Congress



Peter T. King
Member of Congress